U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management

Vale District Office
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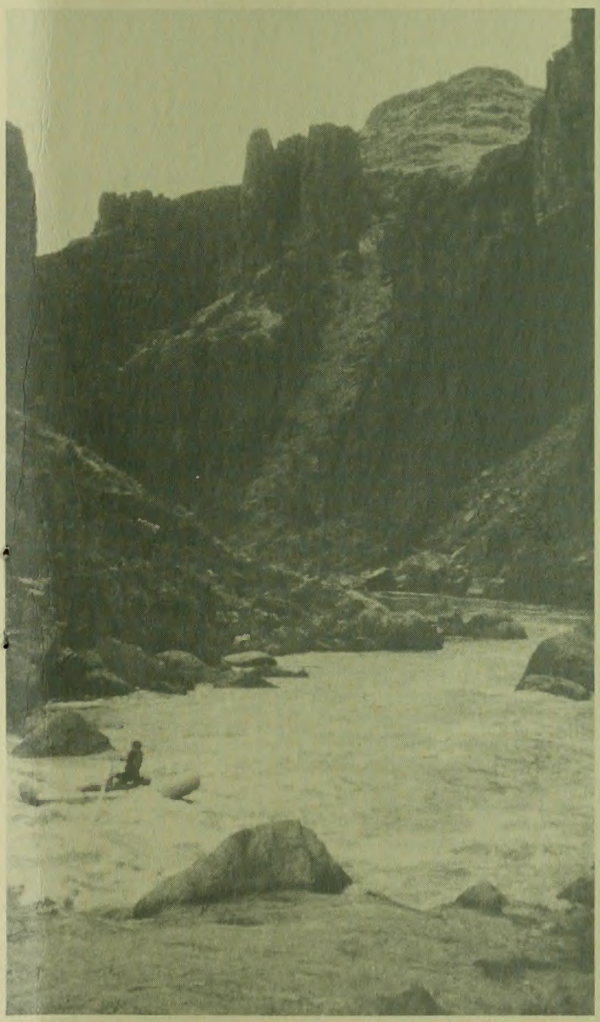
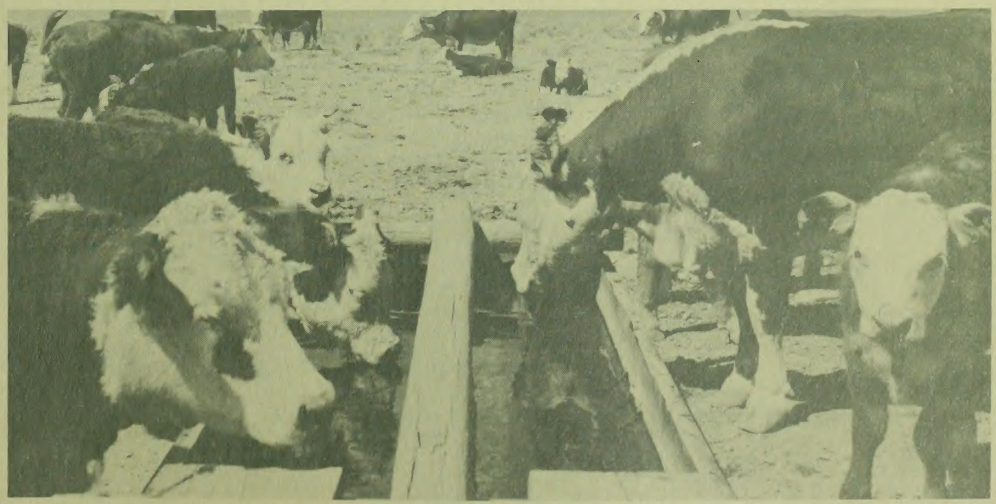
Preferred Land Use Alternative

Southern and Northern Malheur Resource Areas

Vale District





United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

March 14, 1983

Dear Concerned Citizen:

This brochure summarizes the preferred land use alternative developed for the Southern and Northern Malheur Resource Area Management Framework Plans (MFPs) and the Southern Malheur Grazing Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

The preferred alternative reflects public comments and concerns received during all stages of the planning process, but particularly in response to the Summary of Proposed Land Use Alternatives (September 1982). Elements from all four of the land use alternatives are incorporated in the preferred alternative.

The MFPs will guide the resource programs on approximately 4.5 million acres of public land in the Vale District for the next decade. This plan consists of:

- Final District Manager land use decisions for actions that are not significant elements of the grazing or wilderness EISs. These decisions will be implemented within 30 days of the release of this document.
- District Manager's wilderness area recommendations to the Oregon State Director. These recommendations, along with other information, will be considered when a proposed action is selected for the statewide wilderness EIS, scheduled for completion in 1984.
- Preferred Alternative to be analyzed in the Southern Malheur grazing EIS. The draft EIS on grazing management will be distributed to the public this spring. There will be a 60-day public review period and informal meetings to provide opportunities for public comment of the draft EIS.

We appreciate your involvement and assistance in the planning effort, and we look forward to continued public assistance as we complete this process. Anyone interested in the details of the planning effort is invited to visit the BLM District in Vale, where all of the maps, overlays and various documents can be examined.

Barry C Cushing
Northern Malheur Resource Area Manager

Fearl M Parker
District Manager

Raymond E. Monroe
Southern Malheur Resource Area Manager

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Planning Units

The Vale District encompasses 5.1 million acres of public lands, and is divided into three resource areas: Northern Malheur, Southern Malheur and Baker. The Northern Malheur Resource area contains 1.9 million acres of which 0.6 million acres (north half) lies north of Highway 20 in Malheur County. The grazing program for this area was analyzed in the Ironside Grazing Environmental Impact Statement, and decisions were published in Rangeland Program Summaries in January, 1982. The remainder of the Northern Malheur Resource Area (south half) contains 1.3 million acres and lies between Highway 20 and a line between Jordan Valley, Cow Lakes, and Crowley Creek in Malheur County. The Management Framework Plan (MFP) was completed for this Resource Area in 1979 and is being amended in this planning effort to consider wilderness in both parts of the Resource Area, and Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC's) and additional livestock forage data in the south half of the Resource Area.

The Southern Malheur Resource Area contains 2.6 million acres and extends south to the Oregon/Nevada line in Malheur County. The Southern Malheur Resource Area and the south half of Northern Malheur Resource Area comprise the Southern Malheur EIS area (hereafter referred to as the Southern Malheur Planning Area) on which a grazing environmental impact statement will be written following completion of this planning effort.

Approximately 219,900 acres in the Burns District and 13,200 acres in the Winnemucca, Nevada District are involved in the wilderness aspects of this planning effort.

The location and land ownership status are depicted on the General Location Map and Table 1.

The major resource program activities considered in a MFP are: range, wilderness, wildlife, recreation, wild horses, lands, watershed, minerals, cultural and botanical resources and special management area protection. The ensuing discussions and resource allocations apply to all program activities in the Southern Malheur Resource Area, while only range, recreation (wilderness) and special management area protection apply to the south half of the Northern Malheur Resource Area, and recreation (wilderness) in the north half of the Northern Malheur Resource Area.

Table 1
Land Ownership

	Malheur R.A.	Pct Total	South Half Malheur R.A.	Pct Total	Malheur ES Area	Pct Total	North Half Malheur R.A.	Pct Total	Both Resource Areas	Pct Total
Bureau of Land Management	2,655,927[1]	80.1	1,263,275[2]	86.9	3,919,202	82.5	619,000	31.1	4,538,202	67.2
Other Federal	86,622	2.6	40,297	2.8	126,919	2.5	7,599	0.4	134,518	1.9
Private	371,068	11.2	113,039	7.7	484,107	10.1	1,292,141	65.0	1,776,248	26.3
State	201,176	6.1	37,419	2.6	238,595	4.9	68,897	3.5	307,582	4.6
Total	3,314,793	100.0	1,454,030	100.0	4,768,823	100.0	1,987,727	100.0	6,756,550	100.0

[1] Does not include 38,448 acres (28,540 ac. Federal (BLM), 824 ac. Pvt., and 9,084 ac, State) in the Whitehorse Allotment #1008(OR)/#500(ID) as they were brought through the Boise District planning (1979). The area is administered by the Vale District.

[2] Does not include 4,099 acres (4059 ac. Federal (BLM) and 40 ac. Pvt.) in the Brown Allotment administered by the Boise, Idaho District, BLM.

GENERAL LOCATION MAP

Vale District Grazing Management EIS Areas

Public Comment— On Proposed Alternatives and Scope of the Southern Malheur Grazing Management EIS

September 10- November 5, 1982

The land use planning process has generated a moderate amount of public interest and comment on the Land Use Alternatives for the Southern Malheur Management Framework Plan and the Northern Malheur Management Framework Plan amendment. Five public meetings were held with 105 individuals attending who provided 132 oral comments. There were an additional 65 written comments received during the comment period. Three individuals attended more than one public meeting, and 21 individuals who attended a public meeting also submitted written comments.

Of the individuals attending public meetings and preparing written comments, 48 represented themselves, 11 represented local governments, 68 represented industries, 41 represented conservation organizations, and two were from the news media. Table 2 provides a breakdown of this representation.

A summary of public comment is shown in Table 3. The expression of a preferred alternative is listed by the goal and objectives of each alternative that were presented at the public meetings. An additional column (other) and a detailed explanation is provided for a preferred alternative other than the four alternatives outlined. Comments were quite varied, but certain issues such as wild horses, riparian habitat, and wilderness designations were quite clear. The preferred alternative has been developed considering the public's preference along with resource capability, requirements of law, social and economic considerations, and environmental and political concerns.

Table 2
Representation of Public Comment

Representation	Attendance	Written	(2) + (3)	Oral[1]	(3) + (5)
a) Individuals (self) (S)	19	29	48	—	—
b) Government (G)	4	5	11	—	—
c) Industry (I)	55	13	68	—	—
d) Conservation Org. (CO)	25	16	41	—	—
e) Press (P)	2	0	2	—	—
Total	105	65	170	132	197

Governments	No. Represented
State of Oregon—A-95 Clearinghouse	
• Division of Transportation (St. Parks-Recreation Br.)	1
• Economics Division	1
• Oregon State University—Agriculture Extension	1
• State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO)	3
• Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW)	1
U.S Forest Service—Forest Science Lab	1
State of Nevada—Division of Mineral Resources	
Malheur County	1
• County Court	1
• Planning Department	
Total Governments	**11**

Industry	
Oregon Cattlemens Association	61
Livestock—Ranching	1
National Cattlemens Association	1
Mining	1
• Delamar	1
• Rock and Gem	1
• Atlantic Richfield Energy	1
• Pacific Power and Light	1
• Idaho Consumer Affairs	
Total Industry	**68**

Press	No. Represented
• Newspapers	2
Total Press	**2**

Conservation Organizations	
• Wilderness Society	2
• Committee for Idaho's High Desert	4
• Sierra Club	7
• Idaho Wildlife Federation	1
• Idaho Environmental Council (IHC)	2
• Audubon Society	6
• Wild Horse Organized Assistance (WHOA)	1
• American Alpine Club	2
• Mazama et al.	2
• Oregon Wilderness Coalition	8
• The Nature Conservancy	2
• Oregon Natural Resources Committee (ONRC)	1
• Owyhee Conservationists	2
• Earth First	1
Total Conservation Organizations	**41**
Individuals (self)	**48**
Total Representation of Written Comments and Attendance at Meetings	**170**

[1] Oral public comments were not categorized in terms of representation. They can be combined with written comments, however, for a meaningful evaluation of the preferred alternative.

Table 3
Summary of Oral and Written Preferred Alternatives

65 Written Comments
132 Oral Comments (from 104 attendees)

Resource Element (Objectives)	Alternatives A	B	C	D	Other[1]	Total
Livestock Forage	2	19	5	37	39	102
Mineral Development	3	22	5	37	20	87
Rights-of-Way (Lands)	3	21	7	38	17	86
Wildlife	2	19	6	38	25	90
Water Quality	2	20	6	38	16	82
Riparian	5	16	6	38	29	94
Recreation	3	19	7	42	15	86
Wild Horses	8	26	5	18	35	92
Visual Resource Management	2	19	5	36	16	78
Special Area Management	4	16	10	45	23	98
Wilderness	9	17	9	40	28	103
Comments not applicable or not appropriate to Alternative Objectives						32

A. Livestock Grazing

		No.
1.	Use grazing systems to protect riparian areas.	2
2.	Return suspended preference.	1
3.	Economically efficient developments only.	3
4.	No developments.	1
5.	No grazing where rare, endangered and sensitive endemic plants occur.	1
6.	No grazing in Whitehorse Basin where Whitehorse cutthroat trout occur.	1
7.	Develop waters on Owyhee River rims.	1
8.	No grazing.	1
9.	Less livestock than Alternative D.	2
10.	No grazing in special management areas and wilderness.	2
11.	No grazing in riparian areas.	1
12.	Deferred grazing on all range.	1
13.	Only economically efficient developments in wilderness.	1
14.	Allow limited grazing in Alternative A closed riparian.	2
15.	Use natural grass in seedings.	1
16.	Fence riparian areas in Alternative D.	1
17.	Graze fenced recreation areas when no conflict of use.	1
18.	Remove Bogus Creek riparian fences.	1
19.	Remove detrimental developments.	1
20.	No land treatments in Alternative where monocultures are established.	1
21.	Construct water gap fences along Owyhee River to protect livestock and wildlife.	1
22.	Higher allocation of livestock AUMs for my allotment.	1
	Do not increase livestock AUMs (over current allocations). If necessary increase only by supplemental use on an allotment-by-allotment basis.	1
23.	Little or no land treatments.	1
24.	No crested wheat seedings.	1
25.	No early season grazing on hillsides with fragile vegetation.	1
26.	No grazing in critical wildlife areas.	1
27.	Restrict grazing in Alternative C/D where conflict with natural values.	1
28.	Prefer current management all resources (this must mean no special management area designation including no wilderness).	2
29.	Refer to F.7.	
30.	Minimal grazing for commercial purposes.	1

[1] Other (Special Allocation/Comment)

31. Support combination Alternative C and D for grazing in riparian. 1
32. Allow grazing in recreation areas to reduce fire hazard. 1
33. Remove fences in riparian areas, and construct no new fences. 1
34. Meet Class I demand. 3
35. Prefer current management. 1
36. Construct maximum range improvements in WSAs before designation as wilderness. 1

B. Mineral Development

1. No leasing. 2
2. No leasing in special management areas, WSAs, riparian zones, wildlife habitat areas, and visually sensitive areas. 2
3. Alternative C for petrified wood, and Alterntaive C/D for other minerals, except no development in sensitive areas. 1
4. Prefer current management. 2

C. Rights-of-Way (Lands)

1. Close additional roads in Sheepshead and Trout Creek WSAs. 1
2. No utility corridors. 2
3. Re-evaluate need for energy corridors as identified in the Western Regional Energy Corridor Study. 1
4. Trade federal land outside WSAs for private land within WSAs. 2
5. Limited access to special management areas. 2
6. Accelerate exchanges in key or critical areas. 1
7. Combination Alternative C/D for corridors. 1
8. Prefer current management. 2
9. No disposals. 2

D. Wildlife

1. Refer to A.5., A.6., A.27., B.2. 1
2. Allocate forage in Alternative C to all wildlife. 1
3. No wildlife re-introductions. 1
4. No game habitat enhancement. 1
5. Re-introduce big horn sheep in all suitable habitat. 1
6. Increase wildlife AUMs for wildlife commensurate with total AUMs increase. 1
7. Develop winter waters. 1
8. Higher allocation of AUMs than Alternative D. 2
9. Plant browse plants for wintering deer and antelope where fires and past over use have destroyed browse to detriment of these animals. 1
10. Provide maximum protection to key antelope, sagegrouse, mule deer ranges. Identifying sagegrouse habitat before brush control projects conducted. 1
11. Refer to H.14.
12. Increase AUMs for all wildlife. 1
13. Prefer current management. 2
14. Refer to H.18.
15. No guzzlers inside WSAs. 1
16. Prefer alternative that maximizes wildlife. 1

E. Water Quality

1. Refer to A.1., A.6., A.11., A.12., A.14., A.16., A.18., A.21., A.34., F.3., and B.2. 1
2. Prefer current management. Refer to H.17. 1
3. Prioritization—allocate water quality before scenery, otherwise Alternative D. 1
4. Completely maximize natural values. 1

F. Riparian

1. Refer to A.1. 2
2. Refer to A.11., A.14., A.16., A.18 and A.21., E.5., A.34., and A.32. 1
3. Maximize protection of all streams. 3
4. Prefer current management. 1
5. Combination of Alternatives C and D.
6. Support riparian management in Trout Creek and Upper West Little Owyhee WSAs. 1

G. Recreation

1. Control ORV. 1 2. Restrict ORV to existing roads. 2
3. Develop recreation only when demand justifies. 2
4. Eliminate WSAs that overlap wild and scenic designation for Owyhee River. 1
5. Prefer Alternative C/D. 1
6. Prefer current management. 2
7. No ORV use in RNAs, ACECs, or riparian areas. 2
8. Refer to A.17., A.33.

H. Wild Horses

1. Manage at 1971 levels or commensurate with available forage, whichever is less. 4
2. Manage for numbers at slightly less than 1971 levels. 1
3. Manage for minimum viable numbers and shift between herd areas commensurate with available forage. 1
4. Manage at minimum viable levels. 6
5. Eliminate some herds. 1
6. Manage one herd in district. 1
7. Limit numbers to 1000 for district. 1
8. Allocate remaining forage after wildlife, watershed, and livestock needs are met. 1
9. Allocate remaining forage in Alternative B after livestock and wildlife needs are met. 1
10. No horses in Cottonwood Basin or Cold Springs. 1
11. Manage Barren Valley herd commensurate with available forage. 1
12. Develop new waters where existing sources are closed. 1
13. Do not improve breed quality—manage as natural system. 1
14. No seedings or brush control solely for horses. 1
15. Eliminate the Three-Fingers herd. 1
16. Alternative B except fewer numbers. 1
17. Control grazing on streams. 1
18. Reduce AUMs and transfer to wildlife. 1
19. Prefer less horses than Alternative D. 1
20. No large numbers. 1

I. Visual Resource Management

1. Alternative D priority allocation except scenery before water. 1
2. Refer to B.2., E.5.
3. Prefer current management. 2

J. Special Area Management

1. Refer to A.6., A.21., B.2., C.5., G.4., E.5. 2
2. Prefer current management (this must mean no special area designations). 2
3. Add four T, E and S plants in Alternative C. 1
4. Wild and Scenic Designation for Owyhee River. 4
5. Wild designation for Owyhee River. 1
6. Wild designation except construct takeout at Hole-in-the-Ground or Birch Creek. 1
7. Increase Saddle Butte Lava Tubes to include all section 16 and N 1/2 section 20, T.30S., R.39E. 1
8. No overlays of ACECs with other designations that protect same values. 1
9. Propose additional ACEC: Ironside Mountain. 1
10. Alternative E by including all qualifying WSAs. 1
11. No RNAs. 1
12. Designate Owyhee River rim-to-rim wild and scenic. 2
13. Do not expand present Jordan Craters RNA. 1
14. Wilderness designation for ACECs. 1
15. Alternative C for Owyhee Rivers WSAs and RNAs. 1

16. Refer to C.5. 1
17. Preserve all natural values. 1
18. Designate buffer zones. 1
19. Dual designations—WSA and RNA—for Jordan Craters. 1
20. Limit access to areas with special values. 1

K. Wilderness

1. Eliminate WSAs in Whitehorse Ranch, Fifteen-Mile, Barren Valley areas of use. 1
2. Owyhee River WSAs for Alternative A. 1
3. Reduce WSA 3-173A by moving boundary back to nearest sight barriers from roads. 1
4. Owyhee River WSAs for Alternative B. 1
5. Do not designate WSAs with duplicate physical conditions. 1
6. Refer to J.10., J.14., J.15., and J.19. 1
7. Consider additional areas for wilderness. 3
8. Alternative D for WSAs 3-195 and 3-173A. 1
9. Wilderness designation for Trout Creek units and Upper West Little Owyhee WSAs. 1
10. Combine WSAs wherever possible. 1
11. Designate all roadless area (inventoried and otherwise) for wilderness. 2
12. Combine WSAs and close roads between:
    Subunits of 2-72 and 2-74. 2
    3-157 and 3-157A. 1
    3-111, 3-59, 3-110, 3-195 and 3-173. 1
    3-53, 3-56, 3-77A, 3-77B, 3-75 and 3-74. 1
    3-31, 3-32, 3-33A and 3-35. 1
    3-111, 3-110, 3-47, 3-59 and 3-73. 2
    3-120 and 3-128A. 2
    3-195, 3-173A, 3-194 (MIC area), and Idaho River WSAs 1
13. Eliminate WSAs 3-77A, 3-110, 3-153 and 3-195. 1
14. Refer to C.1., G.4., B.2., E.5., J.20., D.15., J.20. 1
15. Include WSAs 3-53 and 3-77B in Alternative C. 1
16. Include entire WSA 3-110, 3-173, 3-195 and 2-74F in Alternative C. 1
17. Designate entire WSA 3-195 (incl. contested area). 1
18. Designate only NE portion 3-159. 6
19. Eliminate S 1/2 of WSA 3-56.
20. Alternative D for all WSAs except extend WSA 3-195 boundary one mile back from rim-to-rim boundary, and reconsider Lookout Butte and Oregon Butte WSAs for designation. 1
21. Alternative D except designate all of 3-194. 1
22. Prefer current management. 1
23. Designate all 36 WSAs. 1
24. Prefer other types of protection than wilderness for Honeycombs, Craters, Leslie Gulch, etc. 1
25. Support more wilderness than Alternative B. 1
26. Alternative B for Owyhee River WSAs, rim to rim. 1

Summary and Results of Grazing EIS Scoping

Public meetings for the purpose of scoping the Southern Malheur Grazing Management Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) were combined with the meetings to discuss the development of the preferred alternative for the Southern and Northern Resource Areas Management Framework Plans (MFPs). The MFPs at that stage consisted of four land use allocation alternatives which had been developed from criteria established with earlier public input. The four alternatives called for various allocations of forage, different amounts of protection for riparian areas and various proposals for range investments.

The MFP Alternatives were discussed in five public meetings in McDermitt, Nevada; Boise, Idaho; and Vale, Jordan Valley and Portland, Oregon during late September and early October, 1982. Both oral and written comments were received and used in developing the Preferred Alternative and four other alternatives to be analyzed in the Southern Malheur EIS.

- Alternative 1 No Action (continue existing level of livestock grazing) This alternative is required by law.
- Alternative 2 Emphasize Livestock Grazing
- Alternative 3 Preferred Alternative
- Alternative 4 Emphasize Non-Livestock Grazing Values
- Alternative 5 Emphasize Wild Horses

The comments received during scoping focused on four main issues: riparian area management, wild horses, forage allocation and range investments.

On the issue of riparian area management, representatives of environmental groups favored complete protection of existing and potential riparian vegetation. Representatives of the ranching industry generally opposed the use of fences to achieve riparian area objectives due to the interruption fences may cause for livestock movement. The Emphasize Non-Livestock alternative provides for maximum protection of riparian vegetation with potential for improvement while the Emphasize Livestock alternative would reduce riparian protection somewhat from the existing level.

Both environmental groups and ranchers objected to any level of wild horses higher than the minimum viable herd level. One wild horse organization advocated the level proposed under Alternative C. A separate alternative which maximizes horse numbers within the grazing capacity and water capacity of the existing herd management areas will be analyzed in the EIS.

The allocation of forage to wildlife received several comments. Some felt that using Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) objectives did not provide enough for all species of wildlife and requested that additional allocations to non-game species be included. The impact of increased wildlife numbers on private hay fields was discussed by several ranchers. The Preferred Alternative, the Emphasize Non-Livestock and Emphasize Wild Horse alternatives would each leave a different amount of forage on the ground after grazing in the form of a "non-consumptive" use. The impact of this allocation on both game and non-game wildlife will be analyzed in the EIS.

Several questions concerning the proposed range investments arose during the scoping period. Ranchers generally preferred to see the maximum amount of range investments (as proposed in Alternative A) analyzed in the EIS. Some environmental groups and others requested that only those investments that return more than they cost be included, while still others questioned the need for any investments at all. The Emphasize Livestock alternative presents the level of range improvements shown in Alternative A; the Preferred Alternative requires that benefits of any allotment proposal equal or exceed costs; the Non-Livestock alternative includes only projects designed to enhance natural values (such as riparian area protection fences); and the No Action alternative has no proposed investments.

Public comment concerning the analysis in the EIS of a "No Grazing" alternative was divided. Some commenters stated that the impact of no grazing should be analyzed in the EIS. Others felt that the No Grazing Alternative represented such an unrealistic extreme that it would be unproductive to analyze in the EIS. The No Grazing Alternative was eliminated from detailed study because it has entirely different goals from any of the land use alternatives, and at earlier steps in the planning process no EIS area-wide livestock grazing conflicts were identified by either the public or by Bureau Specialists.

The Emphasize Non-Livestock and Emphasize Wild Horses alternatives include "no grazing" on selected areas and, thus, provide an analysis of the impact of "no grazing" and identify site-specific conflicts between livestock grazing and other values.

Criteria Used in the Development of the Preferred Alternative

Goals:

- Balance the development and production of commodity and other local personal income-producing resources with the protection and enhancement of natural and cultural resources.

Objectives:

- Improve and maintain vegetative and soil conditions to benefit watershed, wildlife, wild horses and livestock.
- Maintain and enhance water quality in streams and reservoirs, giving priority where existing and potential fishery habitat is limited because of water quality problems. Enhance and maintain important riparian values on perennial streams and reservoirs by controling surface damaging activities (i.e., ORV use, mining, etc.). Prevent damage from livestock grazing through implementation of grazing systems which enhance riparian values.
- Manage for a diversity of wildlife habitat to provide a diversity of wildlife.
- Emphasize production of resources that stimulate local employment, personal income, and public revenue while assuring investments return more than the costs.
- Maintain or revise current Allotment Management Plans (AMPs). Develop, implement, and maintain AMPs on remaining allotments using the categorization of allotments to prioritize rangeland investments, including range improvements such as seedings, brush controls, fences, water distribution systems, and springs and reservoir developments. Rank the allotments to assure the highest payoff investment plan for the Resource Area. Allocate surplus forage to wildlife, wild horses in Herd Management Areas (HMAs) and livestock.
- Recommend wilderness designation of high quality, manageable Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs). Combine WSAs where possible, to facilitate manageability. Allow new range improvements in WSAs that enhance wilderness values by better protecting natural values.
- Recommend the designation of special management areas (ACECs, RNAs, etc.) for the protection and interpretation of outstanding scientific, educational, and cultural resources.
- Keep public land open for exploration, development, or collection of minerals, rights-of-way, utility corridors, and for community, commercial, and private use.
- Provide for a variety of extensive recreational opportunities, including minimal development to protect existing sites, dispersed recreation, off-road vehicles (ORV), and limited access areas.
- Protect and enhance high quality scenery in highly sensitive areas along major travel routes, major water bodies, and selected areas.
- Maintain wild horses in Herd Management Areas (HMAs) at population levels not to exceed 50% of the remaining grazing capacity after the needs of watershed and wildlife are met. Remove wild horses from HMAs when either food or water are not sufficient to maintain a genetically viable population.

Additional Criteria for Implementing the Preferred Alternative

Range Improvements

- No improvements will be allowed in ACEC's, or RNA's that conflict with special management requirements, or in WSA's unless they enhance wilderness values by better protecting resource values.
- No improvements will be allowed in areas with Class I scenic values, and will be limited in Class II scenery in special designated areas, and along major travel routes and major water bodies.
- No land treatments will be allowed in winter deer concentration areas or sage grouse habitat, and only those land treatments in riparian zones will be permitted that are necessary to protect or enhance critical wildlife habitat.
- Modify land treatments in other important deer habitats where cover or browse is a limiting factor. Treat no more than 60% of each area identified to maximize edge effect and habitat diversity.
- Do not conduct land treatments in riparian areas.
- Do not construct new fences within wild horse management areas. Maintain existing fences in HMAs. Conduct no land treatments specifically for wild horses.
- Construct only the range improvements that will return more than the cost unless they are needed for resource protection.

Grazing Systems

Allow no livestock grazing between October 1 to March 15 in seedings which are used by fall/wintering deer or antelope.

Control livestock grazing in deer winter concentration areas and manage for browse and/or cover species.

Modify livestock use in important deer winter areas (including concentrations) to exclude the period from November 1 to March 15 annually.

Restrict livestock use in riparian areas to the late fall/winter/early spring period.

Manage or exclude livestock grazing to favor riparian vegetation in all streams with medium or high riparian improvement potential.

MFP Preferred Alternative—Range Management

Forage Allocations—Under the Preferred Alternative, forage allocations would be adjusted to accommodate the resource values as shown in Table 4. Maximum allowable consumptive forage utilization levels considered in the Preferred Alternative are 50% for native range and 60% for seedings. These levels of use as well as lower levels are computed for a variety of range conditions in order to achieve specific management objectives that would provide a sustained yield of forage over time, and protect soils, forage plants and watershed values. Livestock would be excluded from 12,420 acres of existing and proposed fenced riparian and special management areas. In other major riparian areas, grazing would be controlled to maintain or improve the condition of the area.

The preferred alternative would adjust active grazing use to conform with existing grazing capacity. Ear tagging and trespass control programs would continue to help prevent unauthorized livestock grazing.

Permanent shifts of livestock use from one grazing allotment to another will be considered in the Vale District as a means to meet the preference for grazing of domestic livestock under the following circumstances:

- First, allocations of surplus forage will be made to satisfy total preference of existing permittees in proportion to their contributions to the increased forage production.

- Second, the allotments from which livestock use shifts will be made must have suspended preference or pending reductions.

- Third, the allotments to receive shifts of livestock use must have surplus forage in excess of 7 percent above active preference plus any increases granted under the first allocation.

Applications for shift of livestock use would be evaluated on a case by case basis. Items such as compatability of operations, reasons for reductions in the area to be shifted from, and other relevant factors will be considered. Shifts will be made on a temporary basis for a minimum of five years or until monitoring studies indicate objectives are or will be met with the additional use.

Water Developments and Pipelines

The Preferred Alternative includes construction of 66 springs, 141 reservoirs, and 19 miles of pipeline to aid in meeting the management objectives. New range improvements would be allowed in WSAs and special management areas only if they would prevent the deterioration of natural systems or processes, and be consistent with management policies. Range improvements incompatible or inconsistent with management requirements would not be constructed.

Brush Management

Under the Preferred Alternative, brush control by fire or herbicides would be implemented on 83,526 acres (see Map 1). Land treatments would be permitted on crucial wildlife habitat only when they enhance the area for wildlife.

Crucial wildlife habitat includes: riparian areas, deer winter range, bighorn sheep range, and sage grouse nesting and rearing habitat. No land treatments are proposed in portions of wilderness study areas which have been recommended for wilderness designation by the District Manager, and in special management areas.

Table 4
Preferred Forage and Land Use Allocation Alternative

Current Forage Demand	**AUMs**
Livestock Active Preference	320,346
Livestock Suspended Preference	22,676
Wild Horse Forage (existing use)	18,372
Wildlife Forage (existing competitive use)	5,296
Total Current Forage Demand	366,690
Proposed Allocation of Existing Forage Production	**AUMs**
Livestock Forage	404,906
Wild Horse Forage (See Table 9)	13,200
Wildlife Forage (competitve)	5,296
Existing and Proposed Exclosures	2,617
Nonconsumptive Forage Use	27,846
Total Forage Allocated	453,865
Potential Forage Production Increases and Associated Range Improvements	**Additional AUMs**
Water Developments (299 new waters)	13,341
Springs (66)	
Reservoirs (148)	
Pipelines (26)	
Other (59)	
Land Treatments	
Brush Control (79,581 acres)	9,823
Seedings (34,695 acres)	8,609
Improved Range Condition	39,177
Total Potential Production	70,950
Riparian Zones	
Manage Livestock Grazing	
Streams 148 miles	
Exclude Livestock Grazing	
Streams 47 miles	
Reservoirs 54	
Springs 28	
Rangeland Investment	
Benefits)discounted @ 7.875%	$4,820,000
Costs)discounted @ 7.875%	$2,550,000
Benefit/Cost (B/C) Ratio	1.9/1
Total Construction Cost	$2,540,000
Average Annual Maintenance Cost	$ 72,000

KEY MAP

-N-

0 5 10 MILES

Baker Resource Area

Northern Malheur Resource Area

Southern Malheur Resource Area

BURNS DISTRICT

VALE DISTRICT

Baker Co.

Grant Co.

Baker Co.

Malheur Co.

Harney Co.

Malheur Co.

Malheur Res.

Agency Valley Reservoir

Warm Springs Reservoir

Owyhee Reservoir

Antelope Res

Upper Cow Creek Lk.

Lower Cow Creek Lk.

Barton Lk.

Boco Lk.

Malheur Lake

Ontario

OREGON

IDAHO

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
VALE DISTRICT

MAP 1

Land Treatment Areas

Seedings

Brush Control

Management

AMPs are developed to provide a coordinated program for managing livestock grazing to meet specific resource objectives. To meet these objectives AMP's establish grazing systems, seasons of grazing use, numbers of livestock, and range improvements. Increased forage may be realized either through improved grazing management or the development of range improvements.

AMPs would be prepared for allotments in Improve (I) or Maintain (M) categories. The Improve category allotments normally have the highest priority for AMPs and range improvements. AMPs are not proposed for Custodial (C) category allotments, and range improvements would have low priority for public funding.

Present and potential conditions, present production, conflicts and controversy, present management, and economic return on investment were criteria used when allotments were categorized. Table 5 summarizes the acreage and number of allotments proposed in each category by application of those criteria.

Range Improvements

The range improvements (investments) considered in the Preferred Alternative have an aggregate benefit/cost ratio greater than one, according to a preliminary analysis. Not every improvement included in the alternative returns more than it costs, therefore, an allotment-specific benefit-cost analysis will be displayed in the final grazing EIS. Range improvements may be added or dropped as a result of this analysis.

The proposed range improvements in the Preferred Alternative are within potential funding levels expected during the 10 year planning period. Funding sources may include federal, state, county and private contributed funds. Maintenance of most of these improvements will be the responsibility of the benefitting public range users.

Fences

The Preferred Alternative includes construction of 72 miles of fences needed to meet specific rangeland objectives. Fencing would establish pastures and grazing systems for intensive management. Fencing would also be used to exclude livestock from selected special management areas and riparian zones. The latter areas would be fenced only if riparian objectives could not be met through grazing management or the value of AUMs lost would exceed the cost of required fencing.

Table 5
Selective Management Categories

Management Categories	Maintain	Improve	Custodial	Unalloted[2]
Number of Allotments	24	15	10	4
Acres[1]	2,215,580	1,468,786	216,854	72,236

[1] Federal acres only
[2] Three areas totaling 9,467 acres have been assigned allotment numbers but are not currently formal allotments.

MFP Preferred Alternative—Wilderness

The wilderness preferred alternative is a recommendation to the State Director based upon the land use planning analysis. The State Director may alter these recommendations when a proposed action is selected for the statewide Wilderness EIS (scheduled to be released for public review and comment in the Spring of 1983). The State Director will be looking at the study areas from a statewide rather than a districtwide perspective as he considers their potential contribution to the diversity of the National Wilderness Preservation System. Mineral reports not available to the District will also be available at that time. It should be clearly understood that only Congress makes the final determination as to the area eventually designated wilderness.

All or part of 16 WSAs are recommended for wilderness designation. The areas recommended comprise a variety of ecological and geographical representation ranging from desert lowland foothills to mountain peaks, all having high quality wilderness characteristics. The areas are listed in Table 6 and shown on Map 2.

There are 10 study areas in the southwestern corner of the district, nine of which are all or partially located within the Burns District, and one is partially located in the Winnemucca District. The Burns and Winnemucca District Managers have concurred with the analysis and recommendations being announced through this publication.

The Owyhee Canyon WSA (3-195) extends into Idaho. The preferred alternative for the portion in Idaho is contained in the Boise District's Owyhee planning document.

The Upper Leslie Gulch WSA (3-74) was deleted from further wilderness consideration by the Secretary of Interior on 12-30-82 due to an Interior Board of Land Appeals (IBLA) ruling that WSAs under 5,000 acres do not qualify for wilderness study under Section 603 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA). The Secretary has also deleted split estate lands (lands where the Federal government owns the surface, but the subsurface mineral estate is non-federally owned) due to an IBLA ruling that BLM did not have the authority to include split estate lands within a WSA.

Table 6
Preferred Alternative—Wilderness

WSA Name	Number	WSA Acreage	Acreage Recommended For Wilderness (Preferred Alternative)
Castle Rock	3-18	6,200	0
Beaver Dam Creek	3-27	19,420	0
Camp Creek	3-31	18,360	15,240[1]
Cottonwood Creek	3-32	8,500	7,700[1]
Gold Creek	3-33	12,920	0
Sperry Creek	3-35	5,600	0
Cedar Mountain	3-47	31,440	0
Dry Creek	3-53	22,540	0
Dry Creek Buttes	3-56	49,880	25,520
Owyhee Breaks	3-59	13,100	0
Blue Canyon	3-73	12,700	0
Upper Leslie Gulch	3-74	3,000	0
Slocum Creek	3-75	7,600	0
Honeycombs	3-77A	39,000	36,300
Wild Horse Basin	3-77B	12,100	0
Lower Owyhee Canyon	3-110	73,900	48,300
Saddle Butte	3-111	86,300	0
Palomino Hills	3-114	54,600	0
Bowden Hills	3-118	59,900	0
Clarks Butte	3-120	31,450	0
Jordan Craters	3-128	27,560	22,200
Willow Creek	3-152	30,000[2]	14,000[3] [6]
Disaster Peak	3-153	31,410[4]	29,900[5] [6]
Fifteen-Mile Canyon	3-156	51,300	51,300[6]
Oregon Canyon	3-157	42,880	13,300[6]
Twelve-Mile Creek	3-162	28,600	25,800[6]
Upper West Little Owyhee	3-173	62,500	62,500
Owyhee Canyon	3-195	180,680[7]	144,150[8]
Sheepshead Mtn.	2-72C	53,200[9]	44,600[10] [14]
Wildcat Canyon	2-72D	34,600[11]	34,600[10] [15]
Heath Lake	2-72F	20,100[12]	0
Table Mtn.	2-72I	38,600[12]	24,500[10]
West Peak	2-72J	7,900[12]	0
East Alvord	2-73A	21,600[12]	0
Winter Range	2-73H	14,800[12]	0
Alvord	2-74F	181,770[13]	0
Total		1,396,010	599,910

[1] Recommended as one combined wilderness area totaling 22,940 acres.
[2] Contains 1,700 acres in the Burns District.
[3] Preferred Alternative does not recommend the portion in the Burns District for wilderness designation.
[4] Contains 3,200 acres in the Burns District, and 13,200 acres are in the Winnemucca District.
[5] Preferred Alternative recommends designation for 2,700 acres in the Burns District and 12,300 acres in the Winnemucca District.
[6] Recommended as one combined wilderness area totaling 134,300 acres.
[7] Only includes acres in Oregon. Does not include 33,700 acres in the Boise District.
[8] Only includes acres located in Oregon. Recommended to be combined with suitable acres in the Boise District, Idaho.
[9] Contains 22,600 acres in the Burns District.
[10] Recommended as one combined wilderness area totaling 103,700 acres.
[11] Contains 8,500 acres in the Burns District.
[12] Located entirely in the Burns District.
[13] Contains 80,900 acres in the Burns District.
[14] Contains 22,600 acres in the Burns District.
[15] Contains 8,500 acres in the Burns District.

KEY MAP

N

0 5 10 MILES

Baker Resource Area

Northern Malheur Resource Area

Southern Malheur Resource Area

BURNS DISTRICT

VALE DISTRICT

Baker Co.

Grant Co.

Malheur Co.

Harney Co.

OREGON
NEVADA

IDAHO

3-27
3-18
2-14A
3-35
3-33A
3-31
3-32
3-53
3-77B
3-77A
3-56
3-75
3-74A
3-47
3-73
3-110
3-128A
3-120
3-111
2-23I
2-72F
2-72C
3-114
2-23M
2-87I
2-72I
2-72D
2-72J
2-73H
2-86E
2-86F
2-85F
2-73A
2-85G
2-85H
2-74F
3-118A
3-195
3-162A
3-156A
3-157
3-173A
2-77B
3-152
3-153
2-78D
NV-020-859

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BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
VALE DISTRICT

MAP 2
Recommended Wilderness Areas

3-111 WSA's Recommended for Wilderness Designation By District Manager

3-47 WSA's Not Recommended for Wilderness Designation

2-85F Wilderness Studies Conducted in Andrews MFP, Burns District

The rationale for each wilderness and non-wilderness recommendation is briefly summarized. A detailed analysis of each recommendation is available for public review in the Vale District planning records. The Land Use Alternatives brochure which was distributed to the public in September 1982 also contains detailed a description and the acreage of each WSA.

Wilderness Study Area: Castle Rock (3-18) (6,200 acres)

Recommendation: Non-Wilderness (6,200 acres)

Rationale: The area is not recommended for wilderness designation because of poor configuration, external and internal imprints, restricted public access, concentrated visitor use, and small size.

The configuration is poor because of three narrow extensions from the body of the unit.

The open slopes along the southern and western boundaries allow human imprints from the adjacent private land to be readily visible within the WSA.

Public access is greatly restricted by private land. A pre-FLPMA utility right-of-way crosses the southeastern portion of the WSA.

Visitor use would be concentrated due to extremely steep terrain and a single dominant attraction (Castle Rock). This would negatively influence the quality of solitude and primitive recreation within the WSA.

These factors are compounded by the relatively small size of the WSA. Because of the cumulative effect of these problems, wilderness designation would not be the most appropriate use of the land.

Wilderness Study Area: Beaver Dam Creek (3-27) (19,420 acres)

Recommendation: Non-Wilderness (19,420 acres)

Rationale: Wilderness designation would not be the most appropriate designation due to the cumulative effect of potential range development, poor configuration, and restricted public access.

A proposed 600-acre brush control project would conflict with wilderness designation.

Private property nearly divides the WSA along Bully Creek, producing narrow extensions in the southwestern and northwestern sections which average less than one mile wide and two miles long. Solitude and primitive recreation would be difficult to manage in these narrow extensions, as they are subject to influences from unnatural outside sights and sounds.

Over 50% of the boundary is formed by private property, and development could result in a substantial increase in outside sights and sounds. Most of the adjacent private properties are located along Bully Creek, in the center of the WSA, and along the northwest and southwest boundaries. Public access to the unit and public trespass on the private property could become problems. The wilderness quality is medium to low.

Wilderness Study Area: Camp Creek (3-31) and Cottonwood Creek (3-32) (26,860 acres)

Recommendation: Combine these two WSAs into one 22,940 acre wilderness area. Close approximately five miles of road between them. Attempt to acquire one parcel (640 acres) of non-federal minerals. Exclude 3,900 acres along the southern, eastern and northwestern boundaries.

Rationale: The combined areas would offer very high wilderness values.

Excellent opportunities are available to enjoy solitude and primitive recreation in a generally natural setting with many special features. Special features within the combined area include some very interesting and prominent canyons, critical deer and antelope winter range, excellent raptor habitat, wild horses and red-band trout. Unique ecological interrelationships exist between the canyon cliffs and the raptors, the perennial streams and the trout, and between the diverse wildlife species and their habitat. Opportunities are excellent for educational and scientific study of the geology, wildlife and paleontology.

The road proposed for closure does not service any projects requiring vehicle access. The road is low quality, passable only to high clearance or four-wheel drive vehicles, and most use results from chukar and deer hunters. Ample hunting opportunities, accessible by vehicle, are available nearby.

Acquisition of the non-federal mineral estate would eliminate a need for private access and mineral development, which would have a negative influence upon naturalness.

Three boundary adjustments will eliminate conflicts with access to private property, a Bonneville Power Administration proposed utility corridor, a wild horse trap, and an area of uncontrollable ORV use. The adjustment would also provide a boundary that is easily identifiable.

Wilderness Study Area: Gold Creek (3-33) (12,920 acres)

Recommendation: Non-Wilderness (12,920 acres)

Rationale: This WSA is not recommended for wilderness primarily because a parcel (640 acres) of non-federal mineral estate is located in the center of the unit, in the Gold Creek drainage, and development would severely impair the wilderness values of the area. Another factor that affects quality is the existing highway/utility corridor adjacent to the WSA.

Wilderness Study Area: Sperry Creek (3-35) (5,600 acres)

Recommendation: Non-Wilderness (5,600 acres)

Rationale: Wilderness values are marginal. A transportation/utility corridor adjacent to the WSA and an area of uncontrollable vehicle use negatively influence the area. Adjusting the boundary to exclude these factors makes the area too small to meet the minimum wilderness characteristics. The possiblity of combining this and the Gold Creek WSAs into one wilderness area was considered. However, this is not being recommended, in part because the road between the two WSAs provides the primary access route to the general area.

Wilderness Study Area: Cedar Mountain (3-47) (31,440 acres)

Recommendation: Non-Wilderness (31,440 acres)

Rationale: Wilderness designation is not the most appropriate use of the area due to a large acreage of private and non-federal mineral estate in-holdings, a proposed north-south utility corridor, range project service roads, and multiple range projects.

Four parcels of non-federal mineral estate, totalling over 21,160 acres, are widely scattered over the north, south, east and west portions of the WSA. Development of the mineral rights and access to the parcels would adversely affect the wilderness values.

The proposed North-South Bonneville Power Administration utility corridor would pass through the western portion of the WSA.

Development of and access to an 80 acre private parcel situated near the peak of Cedar Mountain would negatively influence a significant portion of the WSA.

Naturalness and the opportunity for solitude is impaired in the northwest portion of the WSA by two interior dead-end range project roads totalling 6 miles. The range projects consist of 21 reservoirs, 20 miles of fences, and 16 miles of service ways.

Wilderness Study Area: Dry Creek (3-53) (22,540 acres)

Recommendation: Non-Wilderness (22,540 acres)

Rationale: The wilderness values of this unit are limited. The area is not recommended for wilderness designation due to highly visible external imprints, existing mining claims, non-federal in-holdings, and a confined travel corridor within the area.

An off-site Pacific Power and Light transmission line that can be seen by visitors in the WSA north of Dry Creek and on high points in the southern portion negatively influences the naturalness quality.

Access to and development of three parcels of non-federal mineral estate, totalling 1,000 acres would further impair the area's naturalness. One parcel of 640 acres situated in Dry Creek Canyon, is especially critical. Development of several mining claims could also negatively influence the area.

The major travel corridor is confined to Dry Creek Canyon. This would concentrate visitor use and negatively influence the quality of solitude and primitive recreation within the WSA.

Wilderness Study Area: Dry Creek Buttes (3-56) (49,880 acres)

Recommendation: Wilderness designation for the southern 25,520 acres. Attempt to acquire two parcels totalling 1,280 acres of non-federal minerals within this area. Non-wilderness for the northern 24,360 acres. The access route from Deadman Gulch to the Pelican Point Airstrip forms the boundary between suitable and non-suitable areas.

Rationale: The north half lacks the outstanding wilderness characteristics contained in the south half of the WSA. The south half contains several outstanding primitive recreational activities, outstanding solitude and numerous special features. Special features include interesting geologic features such as the Rooster Comb, Red Butte and the "Badlands", a geologic "type section", threatened and endangered (T&E) plants, potential bighorn sheep habitat, excellent raptor habitat, and excellent reptile habitat. Unique ecological interrelationships exist between the soils and T&E plants, between inaccessible mesas and pristine vegetation, and between the geologic formation and the raptor and reptile habitat. The quality of scenery is outstanding, cultural sites are numerous and there are excellent opportunities for educational and scientific study of the geology, soils, T&E plants, wildlife, and the unique ecological interrelationships.

Acquisition of the non-federal mineral estate would eliminate the negative influence of access and mineral development on the area's naturalness.

The access route from Deadman Gulch to the Pelican Point Airstrip is necessary for maintenance of the airstrip by the State Division of Aeronautics.

Wilderness Study Area: Owyhee Breaks (3-59) (13,100 acres)

Recommendation: Non-Wilderness (13,100 acres)

Rationale: Due to poor configuration, narrow travel corridors, private in-holdings, and multiple off-site impacts, and several pre-FLPMA mining claims, wilderness designation would not be the most appropriate use of the area.

Poor internal configuration and narrow travel corridors are created by six private parcels totalling 360 acres in the northern portion which would confine use and impair solitude and primitive recreation opportunities. Development of and access to these parcels, plus development on 4.5 miles of peripheral private land would also impair naturalness.

The southwestern and eastern boundary roads, and the Birch Creek and Hole-In-The-Ground Ranches contribute to significant off-site impacts.

Development of and access to seven pre-FLPMA and one post-FLPMA mining claims in the east central portion of the unit would further impair naturalness quality.

Wilderness Study Area: Blue Canyon (3-73) (12,700 acres)

Recommendation: Non-Wilderness (12,700 acres)

Rationale: The cumulative impacts of continued development of mining claims, adjacent private ownership and legal access problems, preclude recommending the area for wilderness designation.

Poor configuration due to the narrow and irregular shape lessens the opportunity for solitude and recreation.

Eleven pre-FLPMA mining claims located in the southern portion and continued development of an existing mine and access road, which nearly cuts off the southern portion of the WSA, will influence naturalness and configuration.

Development of and access to a 40-acre private parcel at the head of Blue Canyon could negatively influence the WSA. Private property along the river and on top of Diamond Butte Ridge present legal access problems to the units major travel corridor and to several access points

Further development of over seven miles of peripheral private property would add to the external influences.

Because of the cumulative effect of these problems, wilderness designation would not be the most appropriate use of the land.

Wilderness Study Area: Slocum Creek (3-75) (7,600 acres)

Recommendation: Non-Wilderness (7,600 acres)

Rationale: The area is not recommended for wilderness designation due to the lack of legal public access across private property to several of the primary access points and major travel corridors, and because of the area's small size and poor configuration.

Wilderness Study Area: Honeycombs (3-77A) (39,000 acres)

Recommendation: Wilderness for 36,300 acres. Close four miles of road to Shadscale Flat. Non-wilderness for 2,700 acres.

Rationale: The area offers many outstanding primitive recreational activities, outstanding solitude opportunities and numerous special features. Unique or special features within the combined area include the Leslie Gulch volcanic tuff formations, a high concentration of T&E plants, a relict stand of ponderosa pine, a proposed mountain-mahogany Research Natural Area (RNA), bighorn sheep habitat, critical deer winter range, excellent raptor and reptile habitat. Unique ecological interrelationships exist between the soils and T&E plants, geologic formations and the bighorn sheep, and between the raptor and reptile habitat. The scenery is outstanding, and there are excellent opportunities for educational and scientific study of the geology, soils, T&E plants, wildlife, mountain mahogany vegetation, and the unique ecological interrelationships.

A negative influence on the area's naturalness, solitude, and primitive recreation opportunities would be eliminated by closure of four miles of road.

The area not recommended for wilderness contains a community gravel pit, horse trap site with an access road, disturbed mining sites, and a concentration of existing range projects.

Wilderness Study Area: Wild Horse Basin (3-77B) (12,100 acres)

Recommendation: Non-Wilderness (12,100 acres)

Rationale: The wilderness quality of this unit is marginal. Wilderness designation would not be the most appropriate use of the land because of poor configuration, multiple external imprints, needed access to private in-holdings, and multiple range improvements.

A dead-end road to a developed spring nearly splits the WSA in half. Development of a 40-acre private parcel in the southeast portion and continued use of an access road could add to the unnatural influences. A water pipeline with maintenance rights influences a small portion above the Owyhee Marina.

The configuration of the unit is poor because of withdrawn Bureau of Reclamation land in the WSA, a private inholding, an interior dead-end road, an irregular east boundary road (switch-backs), and an interior horse trap site near the south boundary.

A large portion of the area is influenced by external imprints.

Wilderness Study Area: Lower Owyhee Canyon (3-110) (73,900 acres)

Recommendation: Wilderness for 48,300 acres. Acquire five parcels of private property totalling 1,000 acres and close three miles of road. Non-wilderness for 25,600 acres.

Rationale: The area recommended for wilderness offers many outstanding primitive recreational activities, outstanding solitude, and numerous special features. The special features include deeply incised canyons, interesting spires and rock formations, Chalk Basin, sensitive plants, virtually undisturbed riparian zones, excellent fishery, outstanding raptor habitat, deer winter range, potential bighorn sheep habitat, river otter, kit fox, and critical antelope range. Unique ecological interrelationships exist between the aquatic, riparian, and cliff habitats and between the diversity of wildlife species.

The canyonland scenery is outstanding. Numerous archeological sites exist and there is evidence of early settlers.

Opportunities are outstanding for educational and scientific study of the area's wildlife, geology, plants and cultural resources.

Acquisition of the private property and closing three miles of road would improve the area's naturalness and opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation.

The area recommended for non-wilderness has poor configuration, non-federal mineral inholdings, a concentration of private inholdings, interior roads servicing range developments, several mining claims, and the proposed north-south Bonneville Power Administration utility corridor.

Wilderness Study Area: Saddle Butte (3-111) (86,300 acres)

Recommendation: Non-Wilderness (86,300 acres)

Rationale: Wilderness designation would not be the most appropriate use of the land because of the proposed north-south Bonneville Power Administration utility corridor, a horse trap and access road, and vehicle access to the lava tubes for scientific research and recreational enjoyment.

Wilderness Study Area: Palomino Hills (3-114) (54,600 acres)

Recommendation: Non-Wilderness (54,600 acres)

Rationale: Wilderness designation would not be the most appropriate use of the land because of existing material sites, transportation/utility right-of-way, and the adjacent state highway. The wilderness quality of this unit is low.

Wilderness Study Area: Bowden Hills (3-118) (59,900 acres)

Recommendation: Non-Wilderness (59,900 acres)

Rationale: Wilderness designation would not be the most appropriate use of the land because of the proposed north-south Bonneville Power Administration utility corridor which passes through the western portion of the WSA, a dead-end road to a range project which nearly divides the unit, an existing highway/utility right-of-way which passes through a portion of the WSA, and uncontrollable vehicle use over most of the WSA. The wilderness quality of this unit is low.

Wilderness Study Area: Clarks Butte (3-120) (31,450 acres)

Recommendation: Non-Wilderness (31,450 acres)

Rationale: Wilderness designation would not be the most appropriate use of the land because of poor configuration, an interior dead-end road to a range project, a proposed east-west Pacific Power & Light utility corridor, and a proposed 6,450 acre brush control. The wilderness quality of this unit is low.

Wilderness Study Area: Jordan Craters (3-128) (27,560 acres)

Recommendation: Wilderness for 22,200 acres. Non-wilderness for 5,350 acres located along the western and northern portions of the WSA.

Rationale: The portion recommended for wilderness designation offers outstanding primitive recreation opportunities, outstanding solitude opportunities, and numerous special features. The special features include recent lava flows, atypical vegetation at Batch Lakes, Fern Dome and the two kipukas, several rare or sensitive birds, and big-eared bats. Unique ecological interrelationships exist in the young lava flow, margin ecotones, aquatic habitat, and the near pristine kipukas. The scenery is outstanding and there is an excellent opportunity for educational and scientific study of the young lava features and ecological interrelationships.

The area not recommended for wilderness designation has two parcels of private inholdings totalling 120 acres, and three miles of road access to the private property. Wilderness values in this part of the WSA are low.

Wilderness Study Areas: Willow Creek (3-152), Disaster Peak (3-153), Fifteenmile Creek (3-156), Oregon Canyon (3-157), and Twelvemile Creek (3-162) (Total 184,190 acres)

Recommendation: Combine the five WSAs into one wilderness totaling 134,300 acres. Close approximately 44 miles of road. If there are no practical alternatives, allow limited use and maintenance after wilderness designation in order to satisfy the mimimum needs for livestock management. Attempt to acquire 1,800 acres of private property and four easements for public access to major trail heads. Recommend non-wilderness for 49,890 acres.

Rationale: The area recommended for wilderness designation offers many outstanding primitive recreation opportunities, outstanding solitude opportunities, and numerous special features. The special features include several impressive canyons, the Granites, Disaster Peak, massive fault blocks, a wide diversity of vegetation, important riparian zones, a large population of deer, the Whitehorse cutthroat trout, and diverse wildlife species. Unique ecological interrelationships exist between the various wildlife and their habitats. The scenery is outstanding. A large number of cultural sites have been found. Opportunities are excellent for educational and scientific study of the Whitehorse cutthroat trout, cultural sites, and the diversity of wildlife and vegetation.

Closing the roads would eliminate a negative influence on naturalness and solitude/ primitive recreation opportunities, increase the size, improve the configuration, and lessen the influence of external imprints of the units.

Acquisition of the private property would assure protection of the wilderness qualities, and acquisition of easements would provide legal access to some of the major trail heads.

In the areas not recommended for wilderness designation, wilderness would not be the most appropriate use of the land because of the concentration of private inholdings, and substantial external influences.

Wilderness Study Area: Upper West Little Owyhee (3-173) (62,500 acres)

Recommendation: Wilderness—62,500 acres.

Rationale: The area recommended as wilderness offers several outstanding primitive recreational opportunities, outstanding solitude opportunities and numerous special features. The special features include deeply incised canyons, interesting spires and rock formations, sensitive plants, virtually undisturbed riparian zones, outstanding raptor habitat, concentration of sage grouse and critical antelope range. Unique ecological interrelationships exist between the aquatic, riparian and cliff habitats and the diversity of wildlife species. The canyonland scenery is outstanding. There is evidence of early settlers and numerous archaeological sites. There is an outstanding opportunity for educational and scientific study of the wildlife, geology, plants and cultural resources.

Wilderness Study Area: Owyhee Canyon (3-195) (180,680 acres)

Recommendation: Wilderness for 144,150 acres. Acquire several parcels of private (1,360 acres), state (2,320 acres) and non-federal minerals (6,240 acres). Non-wilderness for 36,530 acres.

Rationale: The area recommended for wilderness offers many outstanding primitive recreation opportunities, outstanding solitude opportunities and numerous special features. The special features include deeply incised canyons, interesting spires and rock formations, several warm springs, sensitive plants, virtually undisturbed riparian zones, excellent fishery, outstanding raptor habitat, deer winter range, bighorn sheep habitat, and river otter. Unique ecological interrelationships exist between the aquatic, riparian and cliff habitats and the diversity of wildlife species. The canyonland scenery is outstanding. It contains numerous archaeological sites and evidence of early settlers. The opportunity for educational and scientific study of the area's wildlife, geology, plants and cultural resources is outstanding.

Acquisition of the private and state inholdings and the non-federal mineral estates would protect the area's wilderness characteristics. It would also extend protection to critical portions of the Owyhee Canyon below the rim which are not in federal ownership.

Five separate portions of the unit not recommended for wilderness designation. Wilderness designation is not the most appropriate use of these acres because of poor configuration, private in-holdings, interior dead-end roads, non-federal mineral estate, and a concentration of existing range projects.

Wilderness Study Area: Sheephead Mountain (2-72C), Wildcat Canyon (2-72D), and Table Mountain (2-72I) (Total 126,400 acres)

Recommendation: Combine the three WSAs into one wilderness area of 103,700 acres. Close 14 miles of road. If there are no practical alternatives, allow limited use and maintenance of roads necessary for livestock management. Acquire two parcels of state land totalling 1,280 acres and a 40 acre private parcel. An exchange between the BLM and the State involving these two state parcels is already in progress. Recommend non-wilderness status for 22,700 acres.

Rationale: The combined area offers outstanding solitude and primitive recreation opportunities with several special features. The special features include raptor habitat along the high rims, winter range for mule deer, a proposed RNA, a wildhorse herd, sensitive plant species, cultural sites, scenic quality, sage grouse habitat, opportunities for educational and scientific study of the area, and possible studies for unique ecological interrelationships.

Closing the boundary roads between the WSAs would eliminate a negative influence on the naturalness, and improve solitude and recreation opportunities.

Acquisition of the private and state inholdings would provide for better management of the wilderness area.

The area not recommended for wilderness designation is of low quality. Wilderness designation is not the most appropriate use of the land because of private inholdings, a proposed 3,100 acre brush control, and a known geothermal resource area.

Wilderness Study Area: Heath Lake (2-72F) (20,100 acres)

Recommendation: Non-Wilderness (20,100 acres)

Rationale: The area is not recommended for wilderness designation due to low wilderness quality, poor configuration, proposed range projects (4,100 acres of seeding and 2 wells).

Wilderness Study Area: West Peak (2-72J) (7,900 acres)

Recommendation: Non-Wilderness (7,900 acres)

Rationale: The area is not recommended for wilderness designation due to low wilderness quality and a high potential for geothermal development.

Wilderness Study Area: East Alvord (2-73A) (21,600 acres)

Recommendation: Non-Wilderness (21,600 acres)

Rationale: The area is not recommended for wilderness designation due to low wilderness quality and because a large portion is in a known geothermal resource area (KGRA).

Wilderness Study Area: Winter Range (2-73H) (14,800 acres)

Recommendation: Non-Wilderness (14,800 acres)

Rationale: The area is not recommended for wilderness designation due to low wilderness quality and a high potential for geothermal development.

Wilderness Study Area: Alvord Desert (2-74F) (181,770 acres)

Recommendation: Non-Wilderness (181,770)

Rationale: The WSA is not recommended for wilderness designation due to non-federal minerals inholdings, high potential geothermal development, a horse trap site with three miles of access road, the proposed east-west Pacific Power & Light Company and Bonneville Power Administration utility corridor, and uncontrollable ORV use in a portion of the WSA.

MFP Preferred Alternative—Wildlife Habitat Resources

The preferred alternative would provide habitat diversity for a wide variety of wildlife.

Big Game

Under the preferred alternative, 5,334 AUMs of competitive forage would be allocated to deer and antelope. Surplus competitive forage would also be allocated to deer and antelope as the need is demonstrated.

Bighorn Sheep

Under the preferred alternative introduction of California bighorn sheep would be permitted in areas determined to have suitable habitat, such as the Upper Owyhee River Canyon. These areas would be protected through Wilderness or Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) designation. All introductions or reintroductions would be coordinated with the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW).

Brush Management

Brushland conversion would only be allowed on critical wildlife habitat, such as winter deer concentration areas, bighorn sheep range, riparian areas, and sage grouse habitat when the primary benefits are for wildlife. Conversions in other important deer winter ranges would be restricted to manipulation of not more than 60 percent of the brush vegetation within any given treatment area.

Seedings within deer and antelope range would be periodically grazed heavy by livestock, however, no grazing would be allowed each year during the fall "green-up" period to preserve the new vegetation for wildlife.

Construction Projects

An environmental assessment will be required before any new roads are constructed or existing roads are upgraded. Human activities, such as blasting and the operation of heavy equipment, would be restricted in crucial wildlife areas during periods important to the survival of the species.

Water Availability

Water developments primarily for wildlife would be established at three mile intervals where feasible in water-deficient areas. The shoreline of significant reservoirs in crucial areas would be managed for both wildlife and livestock.

Table 7
Riparian Area Management

Stream Number	Streams	Miles	Preferred Action
1.	Malheur River	10.8	Grazing System
2.	Malheur River	4.5	Exclusion[1]
3.	Cottonwood Creek	6.5	Grazing System
4.	North Fork Squaw Creek	4.8	Grazing System
5.	Gold Creek	4.5	Grazing System
6.	Simmons Gulch	2.0	Grazing System
7.	South Fork Squaw Creek	2.5	Grazing System
8.	Spring Creek	3.0	Grazing System
9.	Succor Creek	5.8	Grazing System
10.	Willow Creek	4.0	Grazing System
11.	Birch Creek	2.0	Grazing System
12.	Carter Creek	3.0	Grazing System
13.	Dry Creek	4.5	Grazing System
14.	Keeney Creek	8.0	Grazing System
15.	Basin Creek	6.0	Exclusion/Grazing
16.	Twin Springs Creek	1.5	Grazing System
17.	Sheep Creek	1.5	Grazing System
18.	Camp Creek	2.0	Grazing System
19.	Owyhee River	4.5	Grazing System
20.	Owyhee River	5.6	Exclusion[1]
21.	Bogus Creek	3.0	Exclusion[1]
22.	Chicken Creek	2.0	Grazing System
23.	Corral Canyon Creek	2.0	Grazing System
24.	Cottonwood Creek (McDermitt)	2.2	Grazing System
25.	Cottonwood Creek (Whitehorse)	4.0	Grazing System
26.	Doolittle Creek	3.0	Grazing System
27.	Fifteen Mile Creek	4.0	Grazing System
28.	Indian Creek	4.2	Grazing System
29.	Line Canyon Creek	2.5	Grazing System
30.	Little Owyhee River	22.0	Exclusion/Grazing
31.	Little Whitehorse Creek	10.8	Exclusion/Grazing
32.	McDermitt Creek	11.8	Grazing System
33.	Oregon Canyon Creek	3.2	Grazing System
34.	Sage Creek	3.2	Grazing System
35.	Twelve Mile Creek	0.5	Grazing System
36.	Whitehorse Creek	13.0	Exclusion/Grazing
37.	Willow Creek	16.5	Exclusion/Grazing
	Total	194.9	

[1] Exclusion—streams segments fenced from grazing MFP

KEY MAP

N

0 5 10 MILES

Baker Resource Area

Northern Malheur Resource Area

Southern Malheur Resource Area

BURNS DISTRICT

VALE DISTRICT

Baker Co.
Grant Co.

Baker Co.
Malheur Co.

Harney Co.
Malheur Co

OREGON

IDAHO

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
VALE DISTRICT

MAP 3

Riparian Management Areas

12 Streams (Numbers refer to stream names listed in table 7)

Riparian Areas

Under the preferred alternative important riparian areas along perennial streams and reservoirs would be managed to provide water quality, soil stability, and fish and wildlife habitat. Land treatments would not be made in any riparian area, unless needed to protect riparian values.

Table 7 and Map 3 show the location, miles of stream, and the preferred management action for protection of the important riparian areas in the planning area. Specific grazing systems are proposed in this alternative and will be analyzed for grazing impacts in the Southern Malheur Grazing EIS. Other riparian areas will be improved or maintained through proper grazing management for soil stability and water quality, where fishery habitat is limited by water quality problems. Other techniques will also be employed if monitoring indicates riparian conditions are not improving.

Fisheries

The preferred alternative would enhance fisheries by improving potential habitat and protecting existing habitat as discussed under Riparian Areas.

Preferred Alternative—Recreation

Fishing, hunting, sighseeing, camping, hiking, and floatboating attract approximately 436,000 visitor days use in the area each year. Owyhee River floating attracted 3,900 people for about 19,500 visitor days in 1981.

Hunting and Fishing

One objective of the preferred alternative is to enhance the quality of hunting and fishing opportunities by the proposed management for wildlife and fish habitat.

Grazing in riparian zones would be managed to enhance native trout habitat. BLM impoundments would be made available for stocking of warm water and cold water fisheries by the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Owyhee River

Designate the Owyhee River as "wild" for inclusion into the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System in Oregon from the state line to China Gulch and from Crooked Creek to the Owyhee Reservoir at Black Rocks. Designate the fourteen mile segment from China Gulch to Crooked Creek as "Recreational" in conformance with the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. Visitor use activities and facility development would be limited to those activities and developments which would assure primitive recreational experiences and preserve a wilderness environment. Livestock grazing would be excluded from the river corridor where alternate sources of water can be provided above the rim. Mining activities would be excluded within the river corridor.

Recreation Sites

Maintain existing overnight campground facilities at Cow Lakes and Antelope Reservoir. Develop toilet facilities at Owyhee Spring, Bone Creek, and Dawson and Jeff's Reservoirs to a level necessary to protect the resource values and to provide visitor safety.

Construct hunter camps within high use big-game hunting areas. Limit development in wilderness areas to a level necessary to protect the health and safety of visitors and wilderness values. Construct boating (floatboating) facilities at Three Forks on the Owyhee River. These facilities would be restricted to those consistent with Wild and Scenic Rivers designation. Access and facility development at Hole-in-the-Ground would not be considered, requiring river users to use the Leslie Gulch boat launch for take out on the Rome to the Reservoir section of the Owyhee.

Additional developments in Leslie Gulch, Snively Hot Springs and Twin Springs would be restricted. Livestock grazing within these three areas would also be restricted.

ORV Use

Limit vehicle use to existing roads and trails on public land within big-game wintering areas, riparian zones, Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs), Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs). and Research Natural Areas (RNAs) in the Southern Malhuer Planning Unit. Current ORV designation will continue to be enforced in the Northern Malheur Planning Unit.

Petrified Wood Collection (McDermitt Area)

Designate the McDermitt Petrified Wood Collecting Area as a public collecting area and rehabilitate disturbed areas as necessary to reduce hazards.

Visual Resource Management (VRM)

Manage the Jordan Craters Research Natural Area (31,390 acres) as VRM Class I lands. This class allows natural ecological changes only.

Manage all public lands identified as VRM Class II lands along U.S. Highways 20 and 95, State Highway 78, major county roads, Succor Creek State Park area, the Owyhee River and Three Fingers and Negro Rock landmarks under VRM Class II objectives. Within VRM Class II lands, changes in any of the basic elements (form, line, color or texture) caused by a management activity should not be evident within the characteristic landscape.

Manage all public lands indentified as VRM Class III lands along U.S. Highways 20 and 95, State Highway 78, major county roads, Succor Creek State Park area, the Owyhee River and Three Fingers and Negro Rock landmarks under VRM Class III objectives. Within VRM Class III lands, changes in any of the basic elements (form, line, color or texture) caused by a management activity may be evident in the characteristic landscape. However, the changes should remain subordinate to the existing visual character of the landscape.

Manage all public lands indentified as VRM Class IV lands along U.S. Highways 20 and 95, State Highway 78, major county roads, Succor Creek State Park area, the Owyhee River and Three Fingers and Negro Rock landmarks under VRM Class IV objectives. Within VRM Class IV lands, changes may be allowed that subordinate the original composition and character, but must resemble natural occurrences within the characteristic landscape.

Rehabilitate disturbed sites in VRM Class II and III areas along U.S. Highways 20 and 95, State Highway 78, major county roads, and along the Owyhee river. Rehabilitate mineral materials sites when sites are depleted or no longer needed for aggregate stockpiling.

MFP Preferred Alternative—Minerals

It is the continuing policy of the United States to promote an adequate and stable supply of mineral materials necessary to maintain national security, economic well-being and industrial production with appropriate attention to a long-term balance between resource production, energy use, a healthy environment, and social needs. Under the preferred alternative, public lands would be kept open for exploration, development or collection of mineral resources while maintaining natural systems and protecting sensitive or critical areas.

Minerals and energy related activities would continue to be regulated under the mining laws to minimize surface disturbance and visual intrusions. Accordingly, BLM would review Plans of Operations and would design mitigation measures to protect special resource values. All operations, including casual use would be conducted in a manner so as to prevent unnecessary or undue degradation and in full compliance with all applicable federal and state laws and regulations, including those related to air quality, water quality, solid waste disposal, protection of fisheries, wildlife and plant habitat, and preservation of cultural and paleontological resources.

The salable and recreational minerals programs would continue under present management.

Leaseable Minerals

Under the Preferred Alternative, all areas under application except those in Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs) would be leased for oil, gas or geothermal resources. These leases would include standard or special stipulations to protect significant resources including: visual resources; sensitive, threatened or endangered plants and animals; critical wildlife habitat; and nonreclaimable lands. Leases occurring in ACECs or RNAs would be restricted in that stipulations would be written to preclude any activity that would be incompatible or inconsistent with the special area management requirements. Leases in process after December 31, 1982, in Wilderness Study Areas will not be issued, and those issued after this date will be cancelled or revoked and returned to pending status. New applications to lease lands within WSAs will be placed in pending status, along with revoked leases and leases in process after December 31, 1982, until Congressional action is taken on the president's wilderness recommendation.

Plans of Operations would be reviewed on a site specific basis to determine the need and degree of environmental protection.

MFP Preferred Alternative—Cultural and Botanical

Cultural

The Preferred Alternative would protect known cultural resources. In addition, BLM would continue to conduct inventories and clearance surveys in advance of projects to ensure that significant archaeological and historic resources are not affected. Where conflicts occur between known cultural sites and proposed projects, BLM would follow procedures prescribed by laws and regulations to avoid unnecessary loss.

Botanical

Under the Preferred Alternative, known or suspected habitats of sensitive, threatened or endangered (S, T, & E) plants of federal and state concern would be protected. BLM would continue to conduct surveys before any ground disturbing activities take place. In addition, further inventories would be conducted to more specifically define population boundaries, essential habitat, and the distribution and abundance of plants of special concern.

MFP Preferred Alternative—Special Management Areas

Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs)

The preferred alternative recommends recommends designation of six ACECs, discussed below, which need special management attention to protect and important resource values. Refer to Table 8 and Map 4. An additional ACEC was proposed during the public comment period, but the values did not meet the ACEC criteria of importance, and, therefore, it was not considered in the preferred alternative.

Honeycombs ACEC

The Preferred Alternative proposes an ACEC of 11,930 acres located along the eastern edge of the Owyhee Reservoir in the Northern Malheur Resource Area.

The area contains highly scenic volcanic rock outcrops. The volcanic outcroppings are massive and literally honeycombed with holes created by the erosive force of wind and water. The soils are fragile and highly sensitive to surface disturbances, including ORV use.

Vegetation is diverse throughout the area, and includes three federally-listed sensitive species. One plant community cell need of the Oregon Natural Heritage Program is filled in this area. The area also provides one of five areas in the State of Oregon where reintroduced California bighorn sheep can be harvested. The habitat can be adversely affected by unregulated human use.

Special management to protect the values will require:

- Maintaining the current ORV closure and posting road signs to deter off-road vehicle travel.
- Securing a protective withdrawal from land use entry, including mining, and providing interim control of mineral and energy-related activity to minimize surface disturbance.

Table 8
Preferred Alternative for Special Management Areas

A. Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC's)	Acres
1. Honeycombs	11,930
2. Leslie Gulch	9,300
3. Owyhee River	30,400
4. Jordan Craters	29,670
5. Saddle Butte Lava Tubes	7,040
6. Whitehorse Basin	1,290
	89,630

B. Research Natural Areas (RNAs)	Acres
1. Honeycombs	11,930
2. Mahogany Ridge	320
3. Stockade Mountain	640
4. Jordan Craters Addition[1]	1,275
	14,165

Leslie Gulch ACEC

The Preferred Alternative proposes an ACEC of 9,300 acres and is located within the Leslie Gulch drainage adjacent to the Owyhee Reservoir in the Northern Malheur Resource Area.

The area contains volcanic rock and ash deposits of unusual color and conformation, distinguishing it from areas of similar volcanic origin. The soils are derived from ash, are droughty, and are highly erosive when the vegetative cover is disturbed. Vegetation is diverse throughout the area, and includes two federally-listed sensitive species which are endemic in North America to volcanic ash deposits. The area is stocked with reintroduced California bighorn sheep and provides one of five hunting areas in the State of Oregon. The habitat can be adversely affected by unregulated human use.

Special management to protect the values will require:

- Maintenance of the current vehicle travel.
- Securing a protective withdrawal from land use entry, including mining, and providing interim control of mineral and energy-related activities to minimize surface disturbance.

Owyhee River ACEC

The Preferred Alternative proposes an ACEC of 30,400 acres and is located in the eastern half of the Northern Malheur and Southern Malheur Resource Areas.

The river is under nomination for "wild and scenic" designation due to it's wild and free-flowing nature and scenic geology. Many petroglyphs, rock shelters, caves, and artifacts make up the cultural resources found in the area, while the historical values of the early settlement era consist of buildings, waterwheels, and whiskey stills. Vegetation is diverse, including four federally-listed sensitive species.

Special management to protect the values will require:

- Maintaining the current ORV closure in the Northern Malheur Resource Area and designating that portion in the Southern Malheur Resource Area as an ORV exclusion area.
- Erecting barriers and signs to defer ORV use and protect the fragile habitat.
- Continuing river patrols during high use to monitor and to prevent over use which may damage the sensitive values.
- Conducting studies of river carrying capacity and then regulating river use to prevent damage to sensitive plants, fish and wildlife habitat.

Jordan Craters ACEC

The Preferred Alternative proposes an ACEC of 29,670 acres located west of Jordan Valley in the Southern Malheur Resource Area. The boundaries have been adjusted from the original proposal to include sections 16 and 36 (state exchange land) to exclude the Clarks Butte addition on the southern end, and to exclude that portion in the Northern Malheur Resource Area north of the Cow Creek and Hole-in-the-Ground roads. The adjustment will eliminate an excessive buffer zone on the northern perimeter. Protection of the Clarks Butte addition is not needed in the foreseeable future due to the low predicted level of mining and other surface-disturbing activities.

[1] Acquired State land within the existing Jordan Craters RNA.

KEY MAP

-N-

0 5 10 MILES

Baker Resource Area

Northern Malheur Resource Area

Southern Malheur Resource Area

BURNS DISTRICT

VALE DISTRICT

Baker Co.

Grant Co.

Malheur Co.

Harney Co.

OREGON

IDAHO

HONEYCOMBS (RNA, ACEC)

LESLIE GULCH (ACEC)

MAHOGANY RIDGE (RNA)

STOCKADE MOUNTAIN (RNA)

OWYHEE RIVER (ACEC)

SADDLE BUTTE LAVA TUBES (ACEC)

JORDAN CRATERS (RNA, ACEC)

WHITEHORSE BASIN (ACEC)

Malheur Res.

Agency Valley Reservoir

Worm Springs Reservoir

Owyhee Reservoir

Antelope Res.

Ontario

Vale

Burns

Malheur Lake

Barton Lk.

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BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
VALE DISTRICT

MAP 4

Special Management Areas

Areas Of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC)

Research Natural Areas (RNA's)

Streams (ACEC's)

The area provides an excellent opportunity for scientific study of mixed-age lava flows and the diversity of plants and animals. The presence of several lava formations, craters, spatter cones, gutters, kipukas, lava dams, tube caves, and contraction cracks provide high quality scenic values and habitat for unique plants and animals. Pristine native vegetation occurs in the kipukas and other small areas throughout the ACEC. Unusual plants and animals occur as the result of impounded water, lava caves, contraction cracks and the "edge effect" of the irregular lava flow pattern. Three plant community cell needs are partially filled, and two federally-listed rare animal species inhabit the area.

Special management to protect these values will require:

- Protection from surface disturbing activities.
- Designating the area as an ORV exclusion area.
- Posting road signs to deter off-road travel and unauthorized mineral extraction.
- Managing livestock grazing to protect pristine vegetation and the present condition of the three vegetative type cells identified through the Natural Heritage Program.

Saddle Butte Lava Tubes ACEC

The Preferred Alternative proposes an ACEC of 7,040 acres and is located approximately 10 miles north of Burns Junction in the Southern Malheur Planning Unit. The boundary has been expanded from the original proposal of 6,400 acres to include 640 acres in the E 1/2 of section 16 and the N 1/2 of section 20, T.30S., R.39E., W.M. This should protect additional suspected lava tubes.

The area contains over eight miles of known lava tubes which for the most part have collapsed leaving only short segments intact. Eighteen uncollapsed segments are accessible for limited scientific exploration. To date, only six caves have been studied to any extent.

Special management attention is required to protect the caves from accelerated erosion, to protect humans from the hazards of tube collapse, and to protect the uncollapsed tubes from surface disturbing activities.

Special management attention to protect the lava tubes from damage and humans from the natural hazards will require:

- Restrict surface disturbing activities on or contiguous with known or suspected tubes.
- Erect roadside barriers and signs where needed to discourage public access to the area.
- Construct no roads and maintain existing roads to the extent necessary to manage the resources in and adjacent to the area.

Whitehorse Basin ACEC

The Preferred Alternative proposes an ACEC of 1,290 acres located in the southwest corner of the Southern Malheur Planning Unit. The boundaries have been adjusted from the original proposal to include the stream bank and a variable buffer strip along 6.75 miles of Antelope Creek, 5.0 miles of Fifteen-Mile Creek, 4.0 miles of Doolittle Creek, 3.0 miles of Cottonwood Creek, 8.0 miles of Little Whitehorse Creek, 6.5 miles of Willow Creek, and 8.5 miles of Whitehorse Creek. The lower 8.0 miles of Willow Creek and 0.5 miles of Whitehorse Creek are excluded. The streams contain the only known habitat for the Whitehorse cutthroat trout which is a federally-listed sensitive species. This species is particularly adapted to the harsh desert environment.

Special management to protect the fragile habitat and to preserve the gene pool for restocking will require:

- Regulation or exclusion where necessary of livestock grazing until riparian vegetation is established and naturally maintains itself.
- Removal of fish barriers
- Stocking fish in suitable habitat.
- Construction of pool habitat.
- Augmenting stream flow by constructing water vention structures and by protecting riparian vegetation from livestock and ORV use.
- Acquisition of private land critical to habitat management.
- Manipulation of cover and shade to maintain existing habitat.

Research Natural Areas

Honeycombs RNA

The Preferred Alternative proposes a RNA of 11,930 acres. The vegetation shall be managed to enhance or maintain the federally-listed sensitive plant species and the identified vegetative cells.

- Sagebrush/needle-and-thread grass on cinders

Livestock use will continue to be licensed and grazing managed to enhance or maintain the vegetation. Range improvements will be allowed as long as they improve the RNA values.

Mahogany Ridge RNA

The Preferred Alternative proposes a RNA of 320 acres. The vegetation would be managed to enhance or maintain the identified vegetative cells:

- Mountain mahogany/sagebrush
- Mountain mahogany/Oregon grape

Livestock use will continue to be licensed and grazing will be managed to enhance or maintain the vegetation. Range improvements will be allowed as long as they improve RNA values.

Stockade Mountain RNA

The Preferred Alternative proposes a RNA of 640 acres. Studies will be initiated to determine the precise nature and condition of tentatively-identified vegetative cells, and to identify additional potential area:

- Western juniper/Idaho fescue/big sagebrush
- Western juniper/big sagebrush/blue bunch wheatgrass
- Western juniper/blue bunch wheatgrass

Livestock use will continue to be licensed and grazing will be managed to enhance or maintain the vegetation. Range improvements will be allowed as long as they improve RNA values.

Jordan Craters Addition

The Preferred Alternative recommends section 16 and 36, T.28S., R.43E., W.M., located within the existing Jordan Craters RNA and containing 1,275.34 acres, be added to and managed with the Jordan Craters RNA. The additional area was acquired by the Federal government from the State of Oregon in a land exchange after the Jordan Craters RNA (30,115 acres) was designated.

The original RNA proposal to add Clarks Butte to the existing Jordan Craters RNA is not recommended at this time because there are no foreseeable land uses that will threaten the RNA values.

MFP Preferred Alternative— Wild Horses

Under the Preferred Alternative there would be six herd management areas (HMAs): Three Fingers, Cold Springs, Jackies Butte, Sheepshead, Coyote Lakes and Sand Springs. Refer to Table 9 and Map 5.

The Three Fingers HMA (76,933 acres) would be reduced in size to reduce conflicts with natural values along Succor Creek in the McIntyre pasture and eliminate conflicts in the Campkettle Pasture. Segments of a fence would be taken out to enhance the free-roaming characteristic of the HMA.

The original Cold Springs HMA (43,225 acres) will remain unchanged.

The Coyote Lakes HMA would encompass part of the Barren Valley South Pasture (133,358 acres) of the Barren Valley Allotment and part of the Sand Gap Allotment (40,012 acres). The total Coyote Lakes HMA would cover 173,370 acres. This HMA adjoins the Alvord-Tule Springs HMA in the Andrews Resource Area, Burns District.

Table 9
Wild Horse Herd Management Areas

Herd Management Areas	Acres	Horse Numbers
Three Fingers	76,933	75-150
Cold Springs	43,225	75-150
Coyote Lakes	173,370	125-250
Jackies Butte	65,062	80-160
Sheepshead	116,122	125-250
Sand Springs	194,846	100-200
Total	669,558	

KEY MAP

0 5 10 MILES

-N-

Baker Resource Area

Northern Malheur Resource Area

Southern Malheur Resource Area

BURNS DISTRICT

VALE DISTRICT

Baker Co.
Grant Co.

Baker Co.
Malheur Co.

Harney Co.
Malheur Co.

COLD SPRINGS (HMA)

THREE FINGER (HMA)

SAND SPRINGS (HMA)

SHEEPSHEAD (HMA)

JACKIE'S BUTTE (HMA)

COYOTE LAKES (HMA)

Malheur Res.

Agency Valley Reservoir

Warm Springs Reservoir

Owyhee Reservoir

Antelope Res.

Malheur Lake

Burton Lk.

Ontario

Lower Cow Creek Lk.

IDAHO

OREGON

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
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VALE DISTRICT

MAP 5

Wild Horse Herd Management Areas (HMA's)

Herd Management Baundary

The Jackies Butte HMA would encompass the area within Dry Creek Pasture of Jackies Butte Summer Allotment (65,062 acres). Horses would be excluded from the Indian Fort Pasture.

The Sheepshead HMA would cover the area within Sheepshead Allotment (78,682 acres) and the Palamino Hills Pasture of Barren Valley Allotment (37,440 acres). The total HMA would cover 116,122 acres.

The Sand Springs HMA would encompass the North Barren Valley (178,260 ares) and East Ryegrass (16,586 acres) Pasture of Barren Valley Allotment. The total HMA would cover 194,846 acres.

Wild horses will be eliminated in the Cottonwood Creek, Potholes and Basque Hills HMAs and would not be re-established in the Atturbury, Cottonwood Basin, Morger or Stockade HMAs due to inadequate forage required to maintain a viable herd size. The option of introducing unrelated animals as a means of improving genetic variation into herds having less than 75 animals was not considered. This option could provide for maintaining herds of less than 75 animals and will be explored prior to preparation of the final EIS.

Herd numbers would be kept at levels commensurate with available forage and drinking water, after allocations are made to watershed and wildlife (see Table 4). Maintaining these herd numbers would require roundups on a four year cycle.

Domestic horse grazing would not be allowed in areas with wild horses. Management practices to improve wild herd stock would be allowed. These practices would include selection for sex and age ratios, color, breed conformation and physical condition (through gathering of undesirable individuals).

MFP Preferred Alternative—Soils and Watershed

The preferred alternative would improve or maintain water quality and reduce soil erosion through management practices and properly designed projects. Where feasible, areas susceptable to erosion would be stabilized to improve the water quality of streams. Highest priority for maintaining or improving water quality would be given to those streams where existing and potential fishery habitat is limited by water quality problems.

Management practices to protect watershed conditions would include the restriction of ORV use in areas susceptable to soil erosion and limiting or excluding livestock grazing from important streamside or riparian zones. Table 7 and Map 3 show the location and miles of stream to be protected under the preferred alternative.

MFP Preferred Alternative—Lands

Land exchanges under the preferred alternative would occur with the state and local governments, and with individuals, when these exchanges are considered to be in the public interest. Primary emphasis will be given to acquiring specific lands to meet the special management requirements of Bureau programs within the area, and to consolidate federal ownership for more efficient land management. Land disposals through any means, including public sales, exchanges, agricultural leases, etc., would not be allowed in Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs) unless a vested right was established prior to the passage of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) on October 21, 1976. If Congress designates a WSA as wilderness, the lands therein would be managed under the provisions of the Wilderness Act, which also disallows any land disposals except where vested rights have been established.

Under the Preferred Alternative BLM will consider acquiring private lands within an area under wilderness review in exchange for public lands that are not under wilderness review. This procedure would also apply to ACECs, RNAs or high value wildlife habitat areas including riparian zones. Necessary access (easements) across private land would be obtained and in special instances scenic easements would be acquired to maintain existing scenic quality.

The Preferred Alternative would provide for the disposal of public land where it can be shown that certain tracts meet FLPMA Section 203 sales criteria. These tracts contribute little to existing resource programs, have few, if any, potential management opportunities and could better serve the national interest by being in private ownership. Specific tracts that meet the Section 203 criteria are identified on planning map overlays in the District Office.

Existing Utility and Transportation Facilities

Two different corridor types would be designated under the Preferred Alternative. These are the existing and operating multiple-use, utility-transportation facilities, and the single-use, utility-transportation facilities:

Multiple-Use Utility-Transportation Facilities

- U.S. Highway 95 (Oregon-Idaho to Nevada State line).
- Oregon State Highway 78 (Harney County to Burns Junction).
- Folly Farms-Crowley. Multiple-Use
- South Fork of Malheur River (Malheur Cave-Venator). Road and Utility Line
- Venator-Riverside (McRae Homestead).
- Fields-Twelvemile Ranch.
- Soldier Creek Road (U.S. Highway 95 to Little Grassy Reservoir).
- Three Forks-Oregon/Idaho State line.
- Oregon State Highway 20-26 (Harper to Juntura).
- U.S. Interstate I-84 (Ontario to Farewell Bend).

Single-Use Utility-Transportation Facilities

- U.S. Highway 95-Twelvemile Ranch Road (transportation).
- Star Valley Road (transportation).
- Cow Lakes Road (transportation.)
- Soldier Creek Road (transportation).
- Harney Electric Cooperative Line (Alvord Lake-McDermitt).
- Pacific Power and Light Transmission Line (E-W utility line).

Proposed Utility Corridors (Western Regional Corridor Study, May 1980)

- Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) utility corridor (east-west route)
- Pacific Power and Light Company (PP&L) utility corridor (east-west route)

The proposed BPA power utility corridor would follow the same route as the proposed PP&L power transmission line.

Under the Preferred Alternative the proposed power east-west utility corridor would enter Oregon in the vicinity of Jordan Valley. A more precise corridor location will depend upon land use decisions in Idaho by the BLM Boise District and corridor modification to avoid the town of Jordan Valley and Antelope Reservoir. From Jordan Valley the corridor would follow the BPA/PP&L proposed route to Rome and then westward to just north of the Whitehorse Ranch where it enters the BLM Burns District. The proposed corridor route within the Burns District is addressed in the August 2, 1982 "Andrews Land Use Plan Proposed Actions" summary which is available from the Burns District office.

- Bonneville Power Administration Power utility corridor (north-south route)

Under the Preferred Alternative the proposed corridor could be designated with slight modifications to avoid the Federal Aviation Administration's VORTAC site at the Rome paved airstrip south of Burns Junction. At some future date, there is a possibility that the corridor would also accommodate a natural gas pipeline proposed by the Northwest Pipeline Corporation.

KEY MAP

-N-

0 5 10 MILES

Baker Resource Area

Northern Malheur Resource Area

Southern Malheur Resource Area

BURNS DISTRICT

VALE DISTRICT

Baker Co.

Grant Co.

Malheur Co.

Harney Co.

Malheur Co.

NORTHWEST MULTI-USE CORRIDOR ENERGY & TRANSPORTATION

MULTI-USE CORRIDOR ENERGY & TRANSPORTATION

PACIFIC POWER & LIGHT ENERGY CORRIDOR

NORTH-SOUTH BONNEVILLE POWER ENERGY CORRIDOR

EAST-WEST PACIFIC POWER & LIGHT ENERGY CORRIDOR

HARNEY ELECTRIC ENERGY CORRIDOR

IDAHO

OREGON

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
VALE DISTRICT

MAP 6

Utility Corridors

Existing

Proposed

It is important to note that both the north-south and east-west utility corridors are only proposals and will not be designated as a direct result of the Vale, Burns and Lakeview Districts current land use planning effort. There is no possibility that either corridor can be officially designated until Congress has considered wilderness designation and enacted wilderness legislation for all the study areas along both routes. Designation of the proposed utility corridors at this time would clearly violate the Federal Land Policy and Management Act by eliminating an option for wilderness designation. It is appropriate to raise the issue of potential utility corridors, identify any major land use conflicts and identify routes which appear to be reasonably acceptable given known multiple use conflicts on BLM lands.

In order for any applicant to obtain a right-of-way permit on the proposed corridor routes, they must comply with the Bureau's 43 CFR 2800 regulations for rights-of-way. These regulations provide for preparation of environmental documents, consideration of alternative routes and/or use of existing corridors. It is also important to note that the designation of a utility corridor is not a commitment by the authorized officer to issue right-of-way permits. If and when we get applications for right-of-way permits within a proposed corridor we will address the environmental impacts on all resources, including any wilderness areas which may have been designated.

MFP Preferred Alternative—Fire Management

Under the Preferred Alternative, both fire suppression and prescribed fire would be utilized in the fire management program.

A fire management plan will be developed for the resource areas. The procedures for "Escape Fire Analysis" on all escaped wild fires will be emphazized in the Suppression section of the plan. This analysis is done by a team consisting of fire managers, line officers, and resource managers once a wild fire escapes initial suppression efforts. The following factors are considered in determining the appropriate level of suppression needed to control the fire:

1. Current and predicted five weather and five behavior
2. Current land use objectives
3. Resource considerations (i.e. soild, vegetation, etc.)
4. Social considerations (i.e. public attitude, improvements, smoke management, etc.)
5. Adjacent land ownership
6. Safety concerns
7. Rehabilitation considerations
8. Cost effectiveness

This system of analysis enables managers to consider the individual benefits of wildfire, yet recognize conditions in which a wild fire would cause unacceptable risks, damages, and costs.

Prescribed fire would play a major role in range improvement. Prescribed fire is the preferred method for controlling brush in many areas and can also be used in maintenance of existing grasslands. With the incorporation of prescribed fire and escape fire analysis in a fire management plan, fires can also help in accomplishing the objectives of the land use plan.

Consistency with State and Local Land Use Plans

All BLM planning and major actions are coordinated with the State of Oregon through the Intergovernmental Relations Division. BLM planning is also coordinatd with county land use plans. All counties in Oregon are required to develop and adopt comprehensive plans consistent with statewide planning goals and guidelines developed by the Land Conservation and Development Commission (LCDC).

The Southern Malheur and Northern Malheur Planning Unit Areas are located in Malheur and Harney Counties. Both counties have adopted comprehensive plans, which are presently under review by LCDC for compliance with statewide goals. The relationship of the preferred alternative to LCDC goals is shown in Table 10.

There are no known conflicts with the Fort McDermitt Reservation tribal lands or other Indian resources or values which are to be protected under the Native American Religious Freedoms Act, or any treaties covering ceded lands.

Table 10
Relationship of the Preferred Alternative LCDC Goals[1]

LCDC Statewide Goal Number Number and Desription	Discussion
1. To insure citizen involvement in all phases of the planning process.	BLM's land-use planning is a process providing for public input at various stages. Public input was specifically requested in developing planning criteria, the preferred alternative and other alternatives to be analyzed in the EIS. Public input will continue to be utilized in the EIS and final decision processes.
2. To establish a land-use planning process and policy frame work as a basis for all decisions and action.	The preferred alternative has been developed in accordance with the land-use planning authorized by the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 which provides a policy framework for all decision and actions.
5. To conserve open space and protect natural and scenic resources.	The Bureau planning system considered natural and scenic resources in resources. development of the preferred alternative. Fencing and vegetation manipulation projects which would impact natural and scenic resources, will be carefully assessed in the grazing EIS.
6. To maintain and improve the quality of the air, water and land resources.	The Federal and State minimum water standards would be maintained under the preferred alternative. Prescribed burning and chemical herbicide application for brush control in the proposed action would not significantly affect air quality. Under the preferred alternative, BLM would manage the rangeland resources on a sustained-yield basis.
8. To satisfy the recreational needs of the citizens of the State and visitors.	The BLM actively coordinates its outdoor recreation and land-use planning efforts with those of other agencies to establish integrated management objectives on a regional basis. Under the preferred alternative, opportunites would be provided to meet recreational needs.
9. To diversify and improve the economy of the State.	The preferred alternative would induce economic gains in the long term due to increased forage production, resulting in improved local and state economy. Mineral and energy exploration and development would be encouraged on public lands to help diversify the local and state economy.

[1] The other goals developed by the LCDC are not generally applicable to the Preferred Alternative.

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